FINANCIAL SECRETARIAT.

Abolition of Annachattrams.

READ—

(Government Order No. 804-17—Muz. 177-14-10, dated 11th October 1916, directing the abolition of 20 Annachattrams in the State and their conversion into Rest Houses.

2. Government Order No. 1462-79—Muz. 268-22-11, dated 17th April 1924, directing the transfer of the buildings of the abolished Chattrams to District Boards for use as Rest Houses.

3. Subject No. 40 of the Birthday Session of the Representative Assembly of 1923, *re* affording equal facilities to members of all communities in the Government Anna-Chattrams in the State.

4. Government Order No. 156-61—Muz. 89-23-6, dated 28th July 1926, appointing a committee to consider the question as to whether under the present altered conditions, the *tasdik* grants now allowed to the Annachattrams may not be diverted to other more beneficent purposes.

5. Letter dated 31st August 1926, from the Secretary to the Annachattrams Committee, forwarding the report of the Committee. (Printed as enclosure.)

6. Correspondence ending with letter No. C. 150 of 26-27, dated 15th September 1926, from the Muzrai Commissioner in Mysore, furnishing his views on the Committee's proposals.

ORDER No. 875-90—MUZ. 89-23-10, DATED 13TH NOVEMBER 1926.

There were originally, sixty-eight Annachattrams and Rest Houses in the State maintained at the expense of Muzrai Funds. The unsatisfactory condition of several of these institutions and the necessity for abolishing such of them as have not been fulfilling the purposes for which they were intended, has long been recognised. So far back as in 1879, it was brought to the notice of Government that the grants allowed to the Annachattrams were for the most part absorbed in paying for their staffs, leaving only a small margin for feeding travellers and that the Chattram buildings were, for want of repairs, totally unfit, in many cases, to provide suitable shelter to travellers. The Chief Commissioner accordingly observed in the Proceedings of 8th December 1879 that the bulk of the Annachattrams might be converted into Rest Houses and that charitable feeding might, with advantage, be confined only to a few special Chattrams and to seasons when it might be required in connection with religious pilgrimages.

2. In the Government Annachattrams in the State, only *bonafide* Brahmin travellers are fed and raw rations are issued to *bonafide* Byragi travellers. Rations may also be given under the existing practice out of the Chattram funds to persons who are deserving objects of charity by reason of bodily infirmity or extreme old age ; such payments are called Nehmi allowances and are allowed either for limited periods or for life in some cases. The number of Nehmidars in some of the Government Annachattrams is large, with the result that feeding is usually stopped for several days in the month on the ground of insufficiency of funds.

3. A representation was made at the Dasara Session of the Representative Assembly in 1909, that rations might be issued to non-Brahmin travellers also in the Government Annachattrams, but Government observed in their order of 17th August 1910, that it was undesirable to enlarge the scope of these institutions beyond the limits recognised by longstanding usage.

4. The working of the Government Annachattrams and their usefulness under the present altered conditions were examined by the Muzrai Committee appointed in the year 1914, and on its recommendation that only the chattrams situated near renowned shrines and *theerthas* and at certain other important centres, should be retained and that the remaining ones might be converted into rest houses, free feeding was stopped in twenty of the Annachattrams. The buildings of the abolished institutions were handed over to District Boards for use as Rest Houses.

5. In the Birthday Session of the Representative Assembly of 1923, the grant of equal facilities to all communities in the existing Annachattrams was again pressed on the attention of Government. Government stated that there were practical difficulties in giving effect to the proposal, but promised that the question of issuing rations to persons who would not take food in Chattrams would be investigated.

6. On further examination of the question in all its aspects, Government came to the conclusion that the system of supplying food, cooked or raw, to travellers of any community in the Government Annachattrams could not be worked satisfactorily and that, in view of the increasing facilities for rapid transport on pilgrim routes that are now available, the need for the continuance of the Annachattrams in the interest of the travelling public had ceased to exist. Before, however, finally deciding on the revision of the existing arrangements in the Annachattrams, Government appointed a committee consisting of the marginally noted gentlemen to consider the question as to whether the funds now utilised for the Annachattrams may not be diverted to other more beneficent purposes, such as the establishment of poor houses, encouragement of Ayurvedic and Unani systems of Medicine, and institutions for the deaf and dumb, the blind, etc.

Rajamantrapravina Dewan Bahadur Mr. P. Raghavendra Rao, Chairman, Retired Member of Council.
Rajakaryaprasakta Rao Bahadur Mr. M. Shama Rao, Retired Inspector-General of Education.
Mr. T. E. Jayarama Iyer, Retired Revenue Secretary.
Mr. B. K. Garudachar, Member, Legislative Council.

7. The Committee has fully considered the subject and submitted a report containing valuable recommendations. It has broadly classified the existing Annachattrams under three heads as follows:—

(1) Local Annachattrams including private institutions receiving grants-in-aid established on pilgrim routes.

(2) Local Annachattrams at pilgrim centres, and

(3) Charities outside the State.

8. As regards the Chattrams on pilgrim routes (twenty-nine in number), the Committee recommends that, in view of the facilities for rapid travelling now available to pilgrims and of the altered conditions in general, the Annachattrams in all these places may be abolished except that at Mysore. In the case of the Chattram at Mysore, which is under the management of the Palace, the Committee suggests that free feeding may be restricted to certain seasons or to special occasions like the Birthday of His Highness the Maharaja and the Dasara. In recommending the abolition of the Government Annachattram at Bangalore, where a certain number of students of the Veda Maha Patasala and of Sri Chamarajendra Sanskrit College are being given one meal a day, the Committee suggests that the sum of Rs. 800 which will become available by the discontinuance of feeding may be utilised for the award of Scholarships to the students of these institutions.

9. There are two private Chattrams in the Mysore District, namely, (1) Pay Master Venkata Rao's Chattram at Lingarajapura, Mandya Taluk, and (2) Jagulal Dharmasala at Mysore, which are now in receipt of Government grants of Rs. 175 and Rs. 864 per annum respectively, and the Committee recommends that the grants to these institutions may also be discontinued in view of the proposed stoppage of free feeding in all Government Annachattrams.

10. As regards Chattrams at pilgrim centres, the Committee observes that these institutions (nine in number) are no longer serving any useful purpose and that there is, therefore, no need for maintaining them with the exception of the Chattram on the Himavat Gopalaswamy Hill. This latter institution which is receiving an annual grant of Rs. 118-8-0 is proposed by the Committee to be retained, as it is situated in an out-of-the-way place where there are no facilities to the travelling public and as it is also largely frequented by poor pilgrims (such as Byragis) on their way to Rameswaram.

11. As regards the three charities outside the State, namely, (*a*) Tirupathi charities with an annual grant of Rs. 20,000, (*b*) Benares Chattram with a grant of Rs. 2,883 per annum, and (*c*) Barahazar Santarpane at Subramanya with a grant of Rs. 3,500 per annum, the Committee recommends their continuance and suggests that, if possible, these charities may be improved and made more efficient.

12. In making its recommendations for the abolition of the local Annachattrams, the Committee contemplates the total discontinuance of the Nehmi charges in the institutions. As the sudden stoppage of these allowances may cause hardship in deserving cases, the Committee recommends that every one of these cases may be carefully examined and necessary relief given from the savings due to the abolition of the Chattrams.

13. The Committee's proposals are calculated to result in a saving of Rs. 32,000 per annum, and as regards the purposes for which the funds released by the abolition of the Annachattrams may be appropriated, the Committee makes the following recommendations:—

(1) Half the savings, or roughly Rs. 16,000 may be granted for the encouragement and development of the indigenous systems of medicine both Ayurvedic and Unani.

(2) The other half of the savings may be used for the following objects of general usefulness, namely,

(*a*) Grants-in-aid to institutions for the relief of the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind,

(*b*) Grants-in-aid to Homes for the relief of the Aged and the Infirm,

(*c*) Grants-in-aid to Orphanages, and

(*d*) Financial assistance to poor students of the Mysore University.

14. The principles on which the suggestions of the Committee are based are all well considered and Government generally approve of them with some modifications in details and are pleased to pass the following orders:—

15. The recommendation of the Committee for abolishing all the Government Annachattrams, except the marginally noted four Institutions, is sanctioned. The grants on the existing scale to these latter Institutions will be continued for the present.

	Annual grant. Rs.
Local Chattram on the Himavat Gopalaswamy Hill	116
Tirupathi Charities	20,000
Benares Chattram	2,883
Barahazar Santarpane at Subrahmanya	3,500

16. The Committee's suggestion for the discontinuance of annual grants to the following two private institutions is also approved.

	Rs.
(1) Pay-Master Venkata Rao's Chattram at Lingarajapura, Mandya Taluk	175
(2) Jagulal's Dharmasala at Mysore	864

17. The grant of Rs. 800 now allowed to the Chattram at Bangalore for giving one meal a day to some of the students of the Sri Chamarajendra Veda Maha Patasala and the Sri Chamarajendra Sanskrit College will be withdrawn and utilised for granting scholarships to the students of these two institutions.

18. The proposal of the Committee that free feeding at the Chattram at Mysore may be restricted to certain seasons or to special occasions is reserved for separate consideration.

19. Out of the grants allowed for the Annachattrams and Rest Houses, charges on account of Nehmi allowances are now being incurred. No more allowances of this nature should be sanctioned or renewed. As regards the stoppage of the existing allowances, the Muzrai Commissioner is requested to institute enquiries into all the cases, with a view to discontinue them immediately or as early as the conditions of each case permit. His attention is invited to para 3 of Government Order of 17th April 1924, in this connection.

20. Government direct that free feeding in the abolished Annachattrams be stopped from 1st January 1927 and that the discontinuance of the grants to the two institutions referred to in para 16 *supra* be given effect to from 1927-28.

21. The Muzrai Commissioner is requested to take prompt action for the disposal of the buildings and connected properties of the abolished chattrams and to reduce from 1st January 1927, to the barest minimum, the establishment to be kept on until the said disposal is complete.

22. When the arrangements sanctioned above are fully given effect to and the connected establishments of the Annachattrams are all disbanded and all the Nehmi allowances are also discontinued, and when the cash balances of the Chattrams already abolished and now ordered to be abolished are invested in securities, it is anticipated that a sum of about Rs. 40,000 per annum will be available for distribution.

23. Government generally accept the suggestions of the Committee for utilising the funds released by the abolition of the Annachattrams, except in regard to the financial assistance proposed to be given to the poor students of the Mysore University. Scholarships and freeships are now allowed on a fairly liberal scale and Government do not consider it advisable to divert any part of these funds for affording financial assistance to the University students.

24. The question of distributing the released funds among the several objects proposed by the Committee is reserved for separate consideration after the exact amount of savings accruing from the abolition of the Annachattrams is ascertained.

25. The thanks of Government will be conveyed to the Chairman and the Members of the Committee for the valuable suggestions and recommendations contained in their Report which has been of great help to Government in dealing with this important matter.

B. SRINIVASA IYENGAR,
Secretary to Government,
Financial Department.